

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2865
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USCINCEUR, VAHINGEN
USDOCOSOUTH

UNCLAS ROME 9113

USDOCOSOUTH FOR INTAF
USEEC
USOECN ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, PFOR, AR, CI, UR, IT
SUBJ: REPORT BY ITALIAN TRADE UNION DELEGATION ACK FROM
ARGENTINA CHILE AND URUGUAY

1. SUMMARY. A FOUR-MAN ITALIAN TRADE UNION DELEGATION VISITED CHILE, ARGENTINA AND URUGUAY AT THE BEGINNING OF MAY AND PARTICIPATED IN THE "ILLEGAL" MAY DAY DEMONSTRATION IN SANTIAGO. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 15, THEY RECOUNTED THEIR EXPERIENCES, PRESENTED DATA ON "REPRESSION" IN THE THREE COUNTRIES AND ANNOUNCED FORMATION OF A FUND TO SUPPORT LATIN AMERICAN RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS. END SUMMARY
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2. THE DELEGATION MEMBERS WERE CGIL AND UIL NATIONAL SECRETARIES MARIO DIDO AND BRUNO BUGLI (BOTH SOCIALISTS), CISL INTERNATIONAL OFFICE CHIEF EMILIO GABAGLIO (RADICAL/CHRISTIAN) AND CGIL INTERNATIONAL STAFFER MARIO GIOVANNINI (COMMUNIST --N NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH CGIL NATIONAL SECRETARY ELIO GIOVANNINI OF THE EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY LEFT). THEIR PRESS CONFERENCE WAS HELD AT

THE CGIL-CISL-UIL FEDERATION (CCU) HEADQUARTERS. (CCU IS A LOOSE UMBRELLA FEDERATION OF THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS.) THE PRESS CONFERENCE HAD ORIGINALLY BEEN SCHEDULED EARLIER, BUT WAS POSTPONED IN THE WAKE OF THE MORE MURDER.

3. THEY WERE GENERALLY POSITIVE AND HOPEFUL ABOUT CHILE, WHERE THEY FOUND "REPRESSION" LESS INTENSE THAN IN THE OTHER TWO COUNTRIES AND EXPERIENCED POPULAR ENTHUSIASM AND COURAGE DURING MAY 1. THEY STATED THAT THE POLICY HAD CAREFULLY USED THE MINIMUM POSSIBLE FORCE IN REPRESSING THE "ILLEGAL" MAY 1 DEMONSTRATION, THAT PINOCHET WAS ATTEMPTING VARIOUS COSMETIC IMPROVEMENTS IN HIS REGIME, AND OPTIMISM SEEMED PREVALENT THAT HARSH DICTATORSHIP'S DAYS WERE NUMBERED. INDIVIDUAL UNIONS FUNCTIONED TO A LIMITED EXTENT, THEY SAID, ALTHOUGH NATIONAL CONFEDERATIONS WERE SUPPRESSED, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF PINOCHET'S "SHAM CAPTIVE CONFEDERATION." THEY WERE IMPRESSED THAT INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE, SUCH AS THEIR VISIT, HAD FAR MORE EFFECT THAN THEY WOULD HAVE IMAGINED.

4. THEIR REPORT ON ARGENTINA AND URUGUAY WAS MUCH MORE NEGATIVE AND LESS HOPEFUL. THEY SPOKE OF THE MILITARY TAKE OVER OF THE UNIONS, AND OF THE DISAPPEARANCE, TORTURE AND KILLING OF UNIONISTS AND OTHERS OPPOSED TO THE REGIME IN ARGENTINA. THEY FOUND URUGUAY EVEN MORE REPRESSIVE AND DISCOURAGING--ONE BIG JAIL, ONE OF THEM CALLED IT. THEY ANNOUNCED A SEMINAR IN VENICE MAY 24-28, SPONSORED BY THE CITY GOVERNMENT, ON "THE URUGUAY UNCLASSIFIED

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CULTURE IN STRUGGLE", AND THE FORMATION OF A FUND TO SUPPORT RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA, FOR WHICH THEY APPEALED FOR SUPPORT FROM OUTSIDE LABOR.

5. CHIOEAN LABOR (CUT) LEADER LUIS MEMESES PRESIDED OVER AND SPOKE AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE, ALONG WITH THE FOUR ITALIANS. AN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE SOUGHT SIGNATURES ON PETITIONS AFTER THE PRESS CONFERENCE. GARDNER

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